



Kathleen Rice

Representing New York's 4th District

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[CONSTITUENT SERVICES](#)

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Dear Friend,

We have reached the end of a very difficult year for our nation. Long Island and communities across the country are still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and further public health resources and economic relief are sorely needed. However, with promising news on the vaccine front, I am hopeful that brighter days are on the horizon.

Last week, Congress passed a long-term bipartisan budget and a \$900 billion coronavirus relief package to provide much-needed assistance to workers and families during this unprecedented crisis. The relief package includes critical funding for rental assistance, childcare and education, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Paycheck Protection Program and other small business programs. It also provides a second round of direct payments of \$600 each to qualifying adults and dependents, an additional \$300 per week in federal unemployment benefits through mid-March, and extends the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, which allows freelance and gig workers to receive unemployment benefits as well.

This relief package is not perfect. More funding is needed for families, businesses and our state and local governments. However, it is a critical next step and I hope it sets the stage for additional bipartisan agreements in the new year. I promise you that I will continue fighting for more relief to ensure Long Island has the resources we need to recover from this unprecedented crisis. It is my top priority heading into the New Year.

Despite all the challenges of this past year, 2020 was not without its bright spots. At the end of this message is a summary of some of our legislative and constituent services achievements that I am most proud of. I hope you will take a moment to read through below.

Lastly, I wanted to remind you again to take this pandemic seriously. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but we are not there yet. Until the vaccines have been distributed on a mass scale to the general population, we need to follow the current guidance. Please keep social distancing, wearing your mask, and avoiding group gatherings.

As always, my office is here to help. We can help with federal agency matters, locating grant opportunities, small business loans and other federal issues. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or if we can ever be of assistance.

Sincerely,
Kathleen

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

Legislative Achievements:

Police Reform

In July, the House passed the [George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020](#), a comprehensive police reform bill that would address police brutality and systemic racism in law enforcement. I was proud to cosponsor this legislation that, among other critical policy changes, would reform the qualified immunity standard to hold officers accountable, create a National Police Misconduct Registry, require officers to use body and dashboard cameras, and impose new restrictions to prevent officers from using deadly force.

National Defense

With my support, the House passed this year's bipartisan defense authorization bill on December 9th, which provides a much-deserved 3 percent pay raise for our military, expands benefits for veterans exposed to Agent Orange, extends paid parental leave for federal civilian employees unintentionally omitted in last year's bill, and makes critical investments to strengthen our national defense. I'm proud that [three of my amendments](#)—to strengthen cybersecurity for smaller and vulnerable federal government agencies, support survivors of sexual assault, harassment, and intimate partner violence at VA, and increase oversight of border wall contracts—were included in the passage of this bill.

Veterans

This year, I introduced the [VA Police Improvement and Accountability Act \(H.R. 7784\)](#), which would provide much-needed reform to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) police force by requiring the use of body cameras for officers, increase crisis de-escalation and suicide prevention training, and other measures to increase transparency and accountability.

I also introduced the [Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act of 2020 \(H.R. 5843\)](#), which would provide the VA Office of Inspector General with testimonial subpoena authority to allow them to conduct thorough investigations and protect veterans by ensuring the VA is operating effectively.

Additionally, I'm proud to share that the [Honoring All Veterans Act \(H.R. 3010\)](#), my bill to change the outdated VA motto to reflect and honor the diverse group of people that serve our nation, passed the House unanimously on September 22nd.

Legislation Enacted Into Law:

At the beginning of this year, the [PFAS Action Act](#) was signed into law, which included my [bipartisan amendment to authorize \\$50 million in new grant funding](#) for communities like Long Island that have already incurred expenses to clean contaminated drinking water.

I'm also proud to share that the bill I sponsored to [rename the Floral Park Post Office](#) in honor of the fallen FDNY firefighter, Lieutenant Michael Davidson, was signed into law on December 3rd. Lieutenant Davidson was a devoted father, husband, and member of the Floral Park community who was killed after responding to a five-alarm fire in Harlem in 2018.

Major provisions of my bill, the [Younger Onset Alzheimer's Act](#), which expands access to programs such as in-home care, meals-on-wheels, and other vital assistance for family caregivers to individuals living with younger-onset Alzheimer's disease but are under 60 years old who previously were not eligible for these services, were included in the *Dignity in Aging Act*, which was signed into law by the President in March.

Additionally, [my provision](#) to require all Members of the House to receive annual cybersecurity and information training was included in [H.Res. 756](#), a bipartisan resolution that includes several recommendations adopted by the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. H.Res. 756 passed the House by a vote of 395 to 13 in March and was enacted soon after.

Constituent Services:

Every year, thousands of constituents reach out to my office for assistance with federal agencies. This year, our office responded to over 68,000 letters, emails and calls from constituents.

In total, my office was able to secure more than \$1.1 million in federal benefits for constituents. And I was also able to help secure more than \$118 million in federal grant funding for our district.

To help small businesses through the pandemic, my office held weekly calls with the business community during the application periods for the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) programs. To date, 159,764 jobs have been retained through the PPP and small businesses in NY-04 have received nearly \$1.8 billion in total federal relief.

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